



Your business  
is our business.

REDACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

7852 Walker Drive, Suite 200  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770  
phone: 301-459-7590, fax: 301-577-5575  
internet: www.jsitel.com, e-mail: jsi@jsitel.com

June 27, 2016

**Via Hand Delivery**

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: WC Docket No. 14-58  
2016 ETC Annual Report of Sledge Telephone Company  
Study Area Code 280466**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of Sledge Telephone Company (“Company”), JSI files the attached confidential version of the FCC Form 481 ETC annual reporting information pursuant to sections 54.313 and 54.422 of the Commission’s rules.<sup>1</sup> Company seeks confidential treatment under Protective Order for section 54.313(f)(2) financial information.<sup>2</sup> The redacted version is being filed this date via the FCC’s Electronic Comment Filing System. In addition, attached is a letter requesting confidential treatment under Sections 0.457 and 0.459 of the Company’s Five-Year Service Quality Improvement Plan Progress Report required by Section 54.313.<sup>3</sup>

Please direct any questions regarding the filing to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

John Kuykendall  
JSI Vice President  
301-459-7590  
[jkuykendall@jsitel.com](mailto:jkuykendall@jsitel.com)

<sup>1</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313, 54.422.

<sup>2</sup> *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90 and 14-58, Protective Order, DA 16-296 rel. March 22, 2016 (Protective Order). 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(f)(2).

<sup>3</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.457, 0.459, 54.313.



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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: WC Docket No. 14-58  
2016 ETC Annual Report of Sledge Telephone Company  
Study Area Code 280466  
Request for Confidentiality**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

John Staurulakis, Inc. (“JSI”), on behalf of its client Sledge Telephone Company (the “Company”) hereby requests, pursuant to Sections 0.457 and 0.459 of the Commission’s rules,<sup>1</sup> withholding from public inspection certain information contained in an attachment to the above referenced reporting requirement. The Company provides the following in support of its request, numbered consistent with the subparagraphs of Section 0.459(b).<sup>2</sup>

1. The information for which the Company is seeking confidential treatment is an attachment to the Company’s annual reporting information pursuant to Sections 54.313 and 54.422 of the Commission’s rules (“Report”).<sup>3</sup>
2. Pursuant to Section 54.313, Rate-of-Return Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (“ETCs”) must file with the Commission a Progress Report on its Five-Year Service Quality Improvement Plan (“Progress Report”) which is contained in the attachment to the 2016 Report.<sup>4</sup>
3. The information contained in attachment for which the Company seeks the withholding from public inspection is the entirety of data pertaining to the Company’s Progress Report provided at FCC Form 481 Line 112 attachment. Information of this nature is confidential commercial information routinely withheld from public inspection.

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<sup>1</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.457, 0.459.

<sup>2</sup> 47 C.F.R. § 0.459(b)(1) through (9).

<sup>3</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313, 54.422.

<sup>4</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313.

Echelon Building II, Suite 200  
9430 Research Blvd., Austin, TX 78759  
phone: 512-338-0473, fax: 512-346-0822

Eagandale Corporate Center, Suite 310  
1380 Corporate Center Curve, Eagan, MN 55121  
phone: 651-452-2660, fax: 651-452-1909

6849 Peachtree Dunwoody Road  
Bldg. B-3, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30328  
phone: 770-569-2105, fax: 770-410-1608

547 South Oakview Lane  
Bountiful, UT 84010  
phone: 801-294-4576, fax: 801-294-5124

4. With respect to identifying the degree to which the subject attachment concerns a service that is subject to competition, the information is of a financial and competitive nature regarding the provision of telecommunications services. The Line 112 attachment contains competitively sensitive information related to proposed improvements or upgrades and maintenance the Company's network.

In its *March 5, 2013 Order*, the FCC. The FCC specified that for rate-of-return carriers, the five-year plans "should describe the carrier's network improvement plan, which should provide greater visibility into current plans to extend broadband service to unserved locations in rate-of-return service territories."<sup>5</sup> The Company's Progress Report updates this information as well as provides maps and detailed information as to whether or not network improvement objectives were achieved at the wire center level. Accordingly, because the Company is a rate-of-return carrier, it must file Progress Reports which contain proprietary, competitively sensitive information related to the Company's existing network including the specific locations of customers as well as describe proposed improvements or upgrades and maintenance of its network throughout its service area. Specifically, this information sets forth services provided by the Company over its existing network including specific locations of customers as well as planned network improvement and maintenance for the years 2015 through 2019 including project start and completion dates, population that will be impacted by the improvements and upgrades at the wire center level and projected capital costs associated with the improvements and upgrades and operating costs associated with maintaining the network including depreciation for investments that have already been made. As such, this information contains competitively sensitive information related to the Company's existing network as well as detailed plans at the wire center level for network upgrades and maintenance projected for the years 2015 through 2019.

5. With respect to identifying possible exposure to competitive harm, the information contained in the Line 112 attachment is information that is not customarily released to the public. This information is proprietary to the Company, is unique to the Company's serving territory and is only known to the Company and its authorized agents. If the Information is not protected, it would have economic value to potential competitors who would be able to target their marketing to specific customers. In a competitive telecommunications marketplace, this type of information is highly sensitive. If publicly disclosed, it would enable competitors to craft business plans that capitalize on their knowledge of the locations of the Company's customers which would place the Company at a competitive disadvantage.
6. With respect to steps the Company has taken to ensure against unauthorized disclosure of the information contained in the attachment, the Company is filing

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<sup>5</sup> See *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket 10-90 *et al.*, Order, DA 13-332 (rel. Mar. 5, 2013) ("*March 5, 2013 Order*") at para 9 citing Section 54.202(a) (1) (ii).

the attachment under seal. The Company uses the information contained in the Progress Report to ensure that its customers continue to receive state-of-the-art high quality telecommunications and broadband services that the Company has been providing to them for many years as well as to satisfy mandatory reporting requirements and does not share the information for which protection is sought. The Company protects the secrecy of this information with a security protocol that ensures the information is not inadvertently disclosed or disseminated. Only directors, managers and employees with a direct need to know are authorized to access the information.

7. Any previous versions of this information are not publicly available.
8. Because the information is not routinely available, a need exists for maintaining the confidentiality of this information permanently.
9. Not applicable.

Based on the preceding, JSI respectfully requests on behalf of the Company that the Commission grant confidential treatment under Section 0.459 to Company's Progress Report provided at FCC Form 481 Line 112 attachment.

Please contact the undersigned with any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



John Kuykendall  
JSI Vice President  
301-459-7590  
[jkuykendall@jsitel.com](mailto:jkuykendall@jsitel.com)

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name: Person USAC should contact with questions about this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number: Number of the person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address: Email of the person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net
	Form Type	54.313 and 54.422

**(100) Service Quality Improvement Reporting  
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481  
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

<110> Has your company received its ETC certification from the FCC? (yes / no)

If your answer to Line <110> is yes, do you have an existing §54.202(a) "5 year plan" filed with the FCC? (yes / no)

If your answer to Line <111> is yes, please file a progress report, on line <112> delineating the status of your company's existing § 54.202(a) "5 year plan" on file with the FCC, as it relates to your provision of voice telephony service.

<112> Attach Five-Year Service Quality Improvement Plan or, in subsequent years, your annual progress report filed pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1). If your company is a CETC which only receives frozen support, your progress report is only required to address voice telephony service.



Name of Attached Document

Please select the appropriate responses below (Yes, No, Not Applicable) to confirm that the attached document(s), on line 112, contains a progress report on its five-year service quality improvement plan pursuant to §54.202(a). The information shall be submitted at the wire center level or census block as appropriate.

- <113> Maps detailing progress towards meeting plan targets
- <114> Report how much universal service (USF) support was received
- <115> How much (USF) was used to improve service quality and how support was used to improve service quality
- <116> How much (USF) was used to improve service coverage and how support was used to improve service coverage
- <117> How much (USF) was used to improve service capacity and how support was used to improve service capacity
- <118> Provide an explanation of network improvement targets not met in the prior calendar year.

Yes



**(300) Unfulfilled Service Request  
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481  
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013

<010> Study Area Code	280466
<015> Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020> Program Year	2017
<030> Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035> Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039> Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

<300> Unfulfilled service request (voice)

<310> Detail on attempts (voice)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Attached Document

<320> Unfulfilled service request (broadband)

<330> Detail on attempts (broadband)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Attached Document

<b>(400) Number of Complaints per 1,000 customers Data Collection Form</b>	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
--	--

<010> Study Area Code 280466

<015> Study Area Name SLEDGE TEL CO

<020> Program Year 2017

<030> Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data Robert SledgeJr

<035> Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line  
<030> 6625693311 ext.

<039> Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line  
<030> rsledge@deltaland.net

<400> Select from the drop-down list to indicate how you would like to report voice complaints (zero or greater) for voice telephony service in the prior calendar year for each service area in which you are designated an ETC for any facilities you own, operate, lease, or otherwise utilize. Offered only fixed voice

<410> Complaints per 1000 customers for fixed voice 0.0

<420> Complaints per 1000 customers for mobile voice

<430> Select from the drop-down list to indicate how you would like to report end-user customer complaints (zero or greater) for broadband service in the prior calendar year for each service area in which you are designated an ETC for any facilities you own, operate, lease, or otherwise utilize. Offered only mobile broadband

<440> Complaints per 1000 customers for fixed broadband

<450> Complaints per 1000 customers for mobile broadband 0.0

**(500) Compliance With Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection Rules  
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481  
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net
<500>	Certify compliance with applicable service quality standards and consumer protection rules	Yes
		280466ms510.pdf
<510>	Descriptive document for Service Quality Standards & Consumer Protection Rules Compliance	

**(600) Functionality in Emergency Situations  
Data Collection Form**

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FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net
<600>	Certify compliance regarding ability to function in emergency situations	Yes
<610>	Descriptive document for Functionality in Emergency Situations	280466ms610.pdf









<b>(1000) Voice and Broadband Service Rate Comparability Data Collection Form</b>	FCC Form 481
	OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
	July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

<1000> Voice services rate comparability certification Yes

<1010> Attach detailed description for voice services rate comparability compliance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Attached Document

<1020> Broadband comparability certification No

<1030> Attach detailed description for broadband comparability compliance

280466ms1030.pdf  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Attached Document

**(1100) No Terrestrial Backhaul Reporting  
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481  
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

<1100> Certify whether terrestrial backhaul options exist (Y/N)

Yes

<1130> Please select the appropriate response (Yes, No, Not Applicable) to confirm the reporting carrier offers broadband service of at least 1 Mbps downstream and 256 kbps upstream within the supported area pursuant to § 54.313(g).

<b>(1200) Terms and Condition for Lifeline Customers</b> <b>Lifeline</b> <b>Data Collection Form</b>	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert Sledge Jr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

<1210> Terms & Conditions of Voice Telephony Lifeline Plans	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">                     280466ms1210.pdf                 </div> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">Name of Attached Document</p>
---	--

<1220> Link to Public Website	HTTP <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black; margin-top: 5px;"/>
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“Please check these boxes below to confirm that the attached document(s), on line 1210, or the website listed, on line 1220, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.422(a)(2) annual reporting for ETCs receiving low-income support, carriers must annually report:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <1221> Information describing the terms and conditions of any voice telephony service plans offered to Lifeline subscribers, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-------------------------------------|
- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <1222> Details on the number of minutes provided as part of the plan, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|-------------------------------------|
- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <1223> Additional charges for toll calls, and rates for each such plan. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|-------------------------------------|

**(2000) Price Cap Carrier Additional Documentation**

FCC Form 481

**Data Collection Form**

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

*Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers*

July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

Select the appropriate responses below (Yes, No, Not Applicable) to note compliance as a recipient of Incremental High Cost support, High Cost support to offset access charge reductions, and Connect America Phase II support as set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(b),(c),(d),(e). The information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

**Incremental Connect America Phase I reporting**

<2010>	2nd Year Certification 47 CFR § 54.313(b)(1)(i) - Note that for the July 1 2016 certification, this applies to Round 2 recipients of Incremental Support		
<2011>	3rd Year Certification 47 CFR § 54.313(b)(1)(ii) - Note that for the July 1 2016 certification, this applies to Round 1 recipients of Incremental Support		
<2022>	Recipient certifies, representing year two after filing a notice of acceptance of funding pursuant to 54.312(c), that the locations in question are not receiving support under the Broadband Initiatives Program or the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program for projects that will provide broadband with speeds of at least 4 Mbps/1Mbps - 54.313(b)(2)(i). Round 2 recipients only.		
<2023>	The attachment on line 2024 includes a statement of the total amount of capital funding expended in the previous year in meeting Connect America Phase I deployment obligations, accompanied by a list of census blocks indicating where funding was spent. This covers year two - 54.313(b)(2)(ii). Round 2 recipients only.		
<2024A>	Round 2 Recipient of Incremental Support?		
<2024B>	Attach list of census blocks indicating where funding was spent in year two - 54.313(b)(2)(ii). Round 2 recipients only.	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	
<2025A>	Round 1 or Round 2 Recipient of Incremental Support?		
<2025B>	Attach geocoded Information for Phase I milestone reports (Round 1 for year three and Round 2 for year two) - Connect America Fund , WC Docket 10-90, Report and Order, FCC 13-	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	
<2015>	2016 and future Frozen Support Certification 47 CFR § 54.313(c)(4)		

<b>(2000) Price Cap Carrier Additional Documentation (Continued)</b> <b>Data Collection Form</b> <i>Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers</i>	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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**Price Cap Carrier Connect America ICC Support {47 CFR § 54.313(d)}**

<2016> Certification support used to build broadband

**Connect America Phase II Reporting {47 CFR § 54.313(e)}**

<2017A> Connect America Fund Phase II recipient?

<2017B> Attach information for Phase II - 54.313(e)(1) - list of geocoded locations already meeting the 54.309 public interest obligations at the end of calendar year 2015 and total amount of Phase II support, if any, the price

Name of Attached Document Listing  
Required Information

cap carrier used for capital expenditures in 2015.

<2018> Attach the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which the carrier newly began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year - 54.313(e)(2)(ii)

Name of Attached Document Listing  
Required Information

<2019> Recipient certifies that it bid on category one telecommunications and Internet access services in response to all FCC Form 470 postings seeking broadband service that meets the connectivity targets for the schools and libraries universal service support program for eligible schools and libraries located within any area in a census block where the carrier is receiving Phase II model-based support, and that such bids were at rates reasonably comparable to rates charged to eligible schools and libraries in urban areas for comparable offerings - 54.313(e)(2)(v)

<2020> Recipient certifies that it offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations specified in §54.309 to 40% of its supported locations in the state on December 31, 2017 - 54.313(e)(3)

<2021> Recipient certifies that it offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations specified in §54.309 to 60% of its supported locations in the state on December 31, 2018 - 54.313(e)(4)

<2026> Recipient certifies that it offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations specified in §54.309 to 80% of its supported locations in the state on December 31, 2019 - 54.313(e)(5)

<2027> Recipient certifies that it offered broadband meeting the requisite public interest obligations specified in §54.309 to 100% of its supported locations in the state on December 31, 2020 - 54.313(e)(6)

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

Complete the items below to note compliance with five year service quality plan (pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.202(a)) and, for privately held carriers, ensuring compliance with the financial reporting requirements set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2). I further certify that the information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

(3009) Progress Report on 5 Year Plan  
Carrier certifies to 54.313(f)(1)(iii)

(3010A) Milestone Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(i)} Yes - Attach Certification

(3010B) Please Provide Attachment Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

(3012A) Community Anchor Institutions {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(ii)} No - No New Community Anchors

(3012B) Please Provide Attachment Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

(3013) Is your company a Privately Held ROR Carrier {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2)} (Yes/No)

(3014) If yes, does your company file the RUS annual report (Yes/No)

Please check these boxes to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 3017, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2) compliance requires:

(3015) Electronic copy of their annual RUS reports (Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers)

(3016) Document(s) with Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows

(3017) If the response is yes on line 3014, attach your company's RUS annual report and all required documentation Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

(3018) If the response is no on line 3014, is your company audited? (Yes/No)

If the response is yes on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains:

(3019) Either a copy of their audited financial statement; or   
(2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers

(3020) Document(s) for Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows

(3021) Management letter and/or audit opinion issued by the independent certified public accountant that performed the company's financial audit.

If the response is no on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains:

(3022) Copy of their financial statement which has been subject to review by an independent certified public accountant; or 2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers

(3023) Underlying information subjected to a review by an independent certified public accountant

(3024) Underlying information subjected to an officer certification.

(3025) Document(s) for Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows

(3026) Attach the worksheet listing required information Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

(3005) Rate Of Return Carrier Additional Documentation (Continued)

FCC Form 481

Data Collection Form

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

**Financial Data Summary**

- (3027) Revenue
- (3028) Operating Expenses
- (3029) Net Income
- (3030) Telephone Plant In Service(TPIS)
- (3031) Total Assets
- (3032) Total Debt
- (3033) Total Equity
- (3034) Dividends


**(4005) Rural Broadband Experiment Additional Documentation  
Data Collection Form**

**FCC Form 481  
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819  
July 2013**

<010>	Study Area Code	280466
<015>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020>	Program Year	2017
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

**4005 Rural Broadband Experiment**

Authorized Rural Broadband Experiment (RBE) recipients must address the certification for public interest obligations, provide a list of newly served community anchor institutions, and provide a list of locations where broadband has been deployed.

**Public Interest Obligations – FCC 14-98 (paragraphs 26-29, 78)**

Please address Line 4001 regarding compliance with the Commission’s public interest obligations. All RBE participants must provide a response to Line 4001.

**4001.** Recipient certifies that it is offering broadband to the identified locations meeting the requisite public interest obligations consistent with the category for which they were selected, including broadband speed, latency, usage capacity, and rates that are reasonably comparable to rates for comparable offerings in urban areas?

**Community Anchor Institutions – FCC 14-98 (paragraph 79)**

**4003a.** RBE participants must provide the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which they newly deployed broadband service in the preceding calendar year. On this line, please respond (yes – attach new community anchors, no – no new anchors) to indicate whether this list will be provided.

**If yes to 4003A, please provide a response for 4003B.**

**4003b.** Provide the number, names and addresses of community anchor institutions to which the recipient newly began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year. Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Broadband Deployment Locations – FCC 14-98 (paragraph 80)**

**4004a.** Attach a list of geocoded locations to which broadband has been deployed as of the June 1st immediately preceding the July 1st filing deadline for the FCC Form 481. Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4004b.** Attach evidence demonstrating that the recipient is meeting the relevant public service obligations for the identified locations. Materials must at least detail the pricing, offered broadband speed and data usage allowances available in the relevant geographic area. Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information  
\_\_\_\_\_

REDACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

<b>Certification - Reporting Carrier Data Collection Form</b>	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<b>&lt;010&gt;</b>	Study Area Code	280466
<b>&lt;015&gt;</b>	Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<b>&lt;020&gt;</b>	Program Year	2017
<b>&lt;030&gt;</b>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<b>&lt;035&gt;</b>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<b>&lt;039&gt;</b>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF THE REPORTING CARRIER IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTING ON ITS OWN BEHALF:**

<b>Certification of Officer as to the Accuracy of the Data Reported for the Annual Reporting for CAF or LI Recipients</b>	
I certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual reporting requirements for universal service support recipients; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported on this form and in any attachments is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	
Signature of Authorized Officer:	Date
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	
Telephone number of Authorized Officer: ext.	
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	Filing Due Date for this form:
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

REDACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

<b>Certification - Agent / Carrier Data Collection Form</b>	FCC Form 481 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819 July 2013
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<010> Study Area Code	280466
<015> Study Area Name	SLEDGE TEL CO
<020> Program Year	2017
<030> Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Robert SledgeJr
<035> Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	6625693311 ext.
<039> Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	rsledge@deltaland.net

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF AN AGENT IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTS ON THE CARRIER'S BEHALF:**

<b>Certification of Officer to Authorize an Agent to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier</b>	
I certify that (Name of Agent) <u>John Staurulakis, Inc.</u> is authorized to submit the information reported on behalf of the reporting carrier. I also certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual data reporting requirements provided to the authorized agent; and, to the best of my knowledge, the reports and data provided to the authorized agent is accurate.	
Name of Authorized Agent:	John Staurulakis, Inc.
Name of Reporting Carrier:	SLEDGE TEL CO
Signature of Authorized Officer:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 06/23/2016
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	Robert SledgeJr
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	President
Telephone number of Authorized Officer:	6625693311 ext.
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	280466 Filing Due Date for this form: 07/01/2016
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORIZED AGENT:**

<b>Certification of Agent Authorized to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier</b>	
I, as agent for the reporting carrier, certify that I am authorized to submit the annual reports for universal service support recipients on behalf of the reporting carrier; I have provided the data reported herein based on data provided by the reporting carrier; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported herein is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	SLEDGE TEL CO
Name of Authorized Agent Firm:	John Staurulakis, Inc.
Signature of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 06/23/2016
Name of Authorized Agent Employee:	Wes Robinson
Title or position of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent	Manager - Regulatory Affairs
Telephone number of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	5123380473 ext.
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	280466 Filing Due Date for this form: 07/01/2016
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

## Attachments

**REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION**

**ATTACHMENT - LINE 112**

**Five-Year Network Improvement Plan and  
Progress Report**

**ATTACHMENT REDACTED IN ENTIRETY**

**Sledge Telephone Company**

**Study Area Code: 280466**

**Response to Line 510 – Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection Rule**

**Compliance for Voice and Broadband**

In establishing this certification in its *2005 ETC Order*,<sup>1</sup> the FCC found that an ETC must make “a specific commitment to objective measures to protect consumers.”<sup>2</sup> The Commission found that for wireless ETCs, compliance with CTIA’s Consumer Code for Wireless Service would satisfy this requirement” and that the sufficiency of other commitments would be considered on a case-by-case basis.<sup>3</sup> In this context, the FCC stated, “to the extent a wireline or wireless ETC applicant is subject to consumer protection obligations under state law, compliance with such laws may meet our requirement.”<sup>4</sup>

Sledge Telephone Company (“Company”) hereby certifies that it is complying with applicable service quality standards and consumer protection rules. The Company is subject to consumer protection obligations under state law. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) filing a Local Exchange Tariff pursuant to the requirements of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Report and Order, FCC 05-46 (rel. Mar. 17, 2005) (“*2005 ETC Order*”).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at para. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* The FCC noted that under the CTIA Consumer Code, wireless carriers agree to: “(1) disclose rates and terms of service to customers; (2) make available maps showing where service is generally available; (3) provide contract terms to customers and confirm changes in service; (4) allow a trial period for new service; (5) provide specific disclosures in advertising; (6) separately identify carrier charges from taxes on billing statements; (7) provide customers the right to terminate service for changes to contract terms; (8) provide ready access to customer service; (9) promptly respond to consumer inquiries and complaints received from government agencies; and (10) abide by policies for protection of consumer privacy.” *Id.* at n. 71.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at n. 72.

Mississippi Public Service Commission which disclose rates, terms, and conditions of service to customers; (2) adherence to state consumer protection requirements governing telephone providers under Title 39 Utilities, Part III rules and Regulations Governing Public Utility Service, Subpart 1, General Rules, and Subpart 3, Special rules – Telephone Companies, including requirements for customer service, billing, consumer complaints, rates and charges, and slamming, under Mississippi Code Annotated Title 77, Chapter 3 statutes; (3) truth-in-billing requirements; and (4) CPNI rules, and (5) red flag rules and other applicable federal and state requirements governing the protection of customers' privacy.

The Company is also subject to consumer protection obligations for broadband services under federal law. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following: public disclosure of accurate information regarding network management practices, performance, and commercial terms of broadband internet access services; as a means of providing sufficient information for consumers to make informed choices regarding use of such services, and for content, application, service and device providers to develop, market, and maintain internet offerings as specified in F.C.C. 47 C.F.R. Part 8 §8.3. The Company furthermore will comply with all requirements set forth in the *2015 Open Internet Order*, as it applies to the Company.

**Sledge Telephone Company**

**Study Area Code: 280466**

**Response to Line 610 - Ability to Function in Emergency Situations**

Sledge Telephone Company (“Company”) hereby certifies that it is able to function in emergency situations as set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47, Part 54, Subpart C, §54.202(a)(2)<sup>1</sup> and in accordance with the orders in Mississippi Public Service Commission Docket No. 2005-AD-662. The Company’s network is designed to remain functional in emergency situations without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations as required by Section 54.202(a)(2). The Company can change call routing translations as needed to reroute traffic around damaged facilities. Changing call routing translations will also allow the Company to manage traffic spikes throughout its network, as emergency situations require.

Specifically in accordance with the orders in Mississippi Public Service Commission Docket No. 2005-AD-662, the Company has a reasonable amount of backup power to ensure functionality without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic and manage traffic spikes. In addition, the Company has comprehensive emergency operations plans in place and will adhere to the Federal Communications Commission’s reporting requirements regarding outages and provide copies of such reports to the Mississippi Commission upon request.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 54.202(a)(2) requires ETCs that are designated by the Commission to “demonstrate its ability to remain functional in emergency situations, including a demonstration that it has a reasonable amount of back-up power to ensure functionality without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations.”

The Company's standby generators and battery back-up support both voice and broadband network equipment should an emergency situation occur.





**Sledge Telephone Company (SAC 280466)**

**Response to Line 1030 – Broadband Rate Comparability**

Sledge Telephone Company provides broadband service that exceeds the FCC's minimum broadband speeds, including up to 20 Mbps symmetric broadband service. However, the Company is located in a very rural part of Mississippi and the cost to deploy broadband services are much higher than in more populated areas. The Company's customer density is low, which makes it difficult for the Company to recover costs of deploying broadband networks. As such, the Company's rates are both reasonable for its customers and provides some ability for the Company to recover its investment.

As an example, the Company's FCC-approved tariff for data-only DSL service was \$159.41 per month for 10/1 broadband service. However, the FCC's broadband benchmark rate is set at \$75.20. The FCC's broadband benchmark rates are based on average rates in urban areas and do not take into account, in fact show a disconnect from, the cost of deploying broadband in rural areas. Further, the Company's tariffed DSL data-only rates are expected to increase to approximately \$195 on July 1, 2016 based on information provided by NECA.

Additionally, due to the distance between the Company and the Internet POP and the additional cost from the NECA tariff, the Company's middle-mile transport costs greatly exceed those of urban Internet providers, further hindering the Company's ability to offer broadband service at the urban benchmark rates.

## **Sledge Telephone Company**

**Study Area Code: 280466**

### **Rates, Terms and Conditions for Lifeline Service**

**(Response to Form 481, Line 1210)**

Local exchange service rates and charges as specified below are for basic local exchange service. The rates for other ancillary services not specifically shown below are presented in Sledge Telephone Company's tariff(s) on file with the Mississippi Public Service Commission. Unless otherwise specified, the rates and charges quoted below are for a period of one month, payable in advance and provide unlimited flat rate calling within the local exchange calling scope.

Residential Local Exchange Access Line Rates:<sup>1 2</sup>

<b>Exchange Name</b>	<b>R-1 Rate</b>
Sledge	\$18.95

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<sup>1</sup> Above listed fees do not include mandatory taxes, fees and surcharges.

<sup>2</sup> Qualified Lifeline customers are eligible for Lifeline credits or discounts as outlined in the attached Lifeline tariff.

REDACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION  
GENERAL SUBSCRIBER SERVICES TARIFF

SLEDGE TELEPHONE CO., INC.  
TC-100-0006-00

SECTION IV  
6<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 14  
Cancels 5<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 14

SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

SERVICE CHARGES

**LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

(T)

**General**

The Company, as part of its obligations as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, offers a low-income assistance program. This program, Lifeline Assistance, is offered under the terms and conditions provided below:

(T)

(T)

**Lifeline Assistance**

**A. General**

Lifeline Assistance is a retail service offering available to qualifying low-income subscribers, as provided for below. Lifeline Assistance enables eligible subscribers to pay reduced charges for the following package of services: voice-grade access to the public switched network; local usage; dual-tone multi-frequency signaling or its functional equivalent; access to emergency services; access to operator services; access to interexchange service; access to directory assistance; and toll blocking. An eligible customer receives credit for the Low-Income Assistance Program pursuant to FCC Order 12-11 and MPSC Docket 2007-AD-487.

(T)

(T)

**B. Regulations**

1. Unless other eligibility requirements are established by the Commission, Lifeline Assistance is available to all residential subscribers who participate in one of the following programs:

- a) Medicaid,
- b) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps,
- c) Supplemental Security Income (SSI),
- d) Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA),
- e) Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP),
- f) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF),
- g) National Free Lunch Program Free Lunch Initiative (NFLP).

(T)

**Income-Based Criteria :**

Household gross monthly income that does not exceed 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

2. Each subscriber to Lifeline Assistance must certify in writing to the Company, under penalty of perjury, that he/she receives benefits under a program outlined in sub-paragraph B.1., above, and must, on the same document, agree to notify the Company if he/she ceases to participate in the program(s). The certification form shall conform to the requirements described herein, and shall be made available upon request to any subscriber. The Company shall retain all such subscriber certifications pursuant to FCC Order 12-11 in order to furnish proof of subscriber eligibility as may be required from time to time by Universal Service administrators.

(T)

Issue Date: 3/15/12  
Effective Date: 4/15/12  
Order Number:

Filed By: Robert O. Sledge, Jr., President  
P. O. Box 68  
Sunflower, Mississippi 38778

REPACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION  
GENERAL SUBSCRIBER SERVICES TARIFF

SLEDGE TELEPHONE CO., INC.  
TC-100-0006-00

SECTION IV  
5<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 15  
Cancels 4<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 15

SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

SERVICE CHARGES

**LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (Continued)**

(T)

**Lifeline Assistance (Continued)**

**B. Regulations (Continued)**

3. All applications for this service are subject to verifications with the state agency responsible for administration of the qualifying program. The Company may request any additional documentation deemed necessary prior to providing Lifeline benefits such as an administrating agency's official designation of eligibility in a particular means-based program sub-paragraph B.1., above, and that the telephone subscriber is the financially responsible party for the qualifying member of his or her household, or that the eligible household member is the telephone subscriber's dependent pursuant to the rules and regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. (D)  
(T)
4. The Company will reconcile and confirm eligibility periodically pursuant to FCC Order 12-11. At least annually an FCC-compliant random survey of a statistically valid number of the Lifeline subscribers which request that each surveyed subscriber verify under penalty of perjury that they, or a member of their household continue to participate in one of the means-based programs approved herein for eligibility by the Commission and/or survey at least annually the entire Lifeline subscriber base requesting that each surveyed subscriber verify under penalty of perjury that they, or a member of their household continue to participate in one of the means-based programs established by the Commission as eligible for lifeline funding. Lifeline subscribers who are subsequently determined to be ineligible shall be notified of their ineligibility in writing by the Company and provided 60 days from the date of such notice to rectify or otherwise demonstrate their eligibility prior to the discontinuance of their Lifeline benefits. All unresolved disputes regarding Lifeline eligibility shall be brought to the attention of the Commission for resolution. (T)  
(T)
- 5.
6. A subscriber may elect at the time of subscription to Lifeline Assistance to receive toll blocking as part of Lifeline Assistance at no charge. "Toll Blocking" is a service that allows a subscriber to elect not to allow the completion of outgoing toll calls from the subscriber's residence. Local service deposit requirements will be waived for customers who voluntarily receive Toll Limitation Service. (T)

Issue Date: 3/15/12  
Effective Date: 4/15/12  
Order Number:

Filed By: Robert O. Sledge, Jr., President  
P. O. Box 68  
Sunflower, Mississippi 38778

REDACTED FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION  
GENERAL SUBSCRIBER SERVICES TARIFF

SLEDGE TELEPHONE CO., INC.  
TC-100-0006-00

SECTION IV  
1<sup>st</sup> Revised Sheet 15.1  
Cancels Original Sheet 15.1

SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

SERVICE CHARGES

**LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (Continued)**

(T)

**Lifeline Assistance (Continued)**

**B. Regulations (Continued)**

7. Lifeline Assistance will not be disconnected for non-payment of toll charges, however, in the event toll charges are not paid within 10 days of the mailing of the Company bill, the Company will implement Toll Blocking immediately thereafter. In addition, the Company will not deny re-establishment of local service to customers who are eligible for Lifeline Assistance and have previously been disconnected for non-payment of toll charges. Lifeline Assistance will not be connected if an outstanding balance is owed by the customer for local service.
8. The Company may not collect a service deposit in order to initiate lifeline Assistance if the qualifying low-income subscriber voluntarily elects toll blocking from the Company, where available. If toll blocking is unavailable, then the Company may charge a service deposit.
9. (D)  
(D)
10. Only one Lifeline service is available per residential household pursuant to FCC Order 12-11. A household is any individual or group of individuals who are living together at the same address as one economic unit. A household may include related and unrelated persons. An "economic unit" consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household. An adult is any person eighteen years or older. If an adult has no or minimal income, and lives with someone who provides financial support to him/her, both people shall be considered part of the same household. Children under the age of eighteen living with their parents or guardians are considered to be part of the same household as their parents or guardians. A household is not permitted to receive Lifeline benefits from multiple providers. (T)
11. A Lifeline customer may subscribe to any local service offering available to other residential customers.
12. The PIC charge will not be billed to Lifeline customers who subscribe to toll blocking and do not presubscribe to a long distance carrier.

Issue Date: 3/15/12  
Effective Date: 4/15/12  
Order Number:

Filed By: Robert O. Sledge, Jr., President  
P. O. Box 68  
Sunflower, Mississippi 38778

REDACTED FOR SUBSCRIPTION  
GENERAL SUBSCRIBER SERVICES TARIFF

SLEDGE TELEPHONE CO., INC.  
TC-100-0006-00

SECTION IV  
5<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 16  
Cancels 4<sup>th</sup> Revised Sheet 16

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SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

SERVICE CHARGES

**LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (Continued)** (T)

Lifeline Assistance (Continued)

C. Credits

1. The following credit\* will apply for each customer eligible for Lifeline Assistance: (T)

**Monthly Credit\***

a) Lifeline Credit<sup>①</sup> \$9.25 (T) (C)

(D)  
|  
|  
(D)

2. The Company shall apply the baseline payments received by the administrator of the Federal Lifeline Assistance program to the qualifying customer's basic local exchange service rate, pursuant to FCC Order 12-11 and MPSC Docket 2007-AD-487. (T)  
|  
(T)

3. Partial payments that are received from Lifeline customers shall first be applied to local service charges and then to any outstanding toll charges.

\* Credit amount will not exceed the total of the basic Residential Local Exchange and Subscriber Line Charge rate. (T)  
(D)  
|  
|

① Rates are in compliance with FCC Order 12-11 and are effective on dates determined by the FCC under Order 12-11. (D)  
(N)  
(N)

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Issue Date: 3/15/12  
Effective Date: 4/15/12  
Order Number:

Filed By: Robert O. Sledge, Jr., President  
P. O. Box 68  
Sunflower, Mississippi 38778

**Sledge Telephone Company**

**Study Area Code: 280466**

**Response to Line 3010 – Milestone Certification (47 CFR §54.313(f)(1)(i))**

Sledge Telephone Company hereby certifies that throughout 2015, it took reasonable steps to provide upon reasonable request broadband service at actual speeds of at least 10 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream, with latency suitable for real-time applications, including Voice over Internet Protocol, and usage capacity that is reasonably comparable to comparable offerings in urban areas and that requests for such service are met within a reasonable amount of time. If a request for broadband service at actual speeds of at least 10 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream is unreasonable, and offering broadband service at actual speeds of at least 4 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream is reasonable, Sledge Telephone Company offers broadband service at actual speeds of at least 4 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream.

**REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION**

**ATTACHMENT - LINE 3017**

**ATTACHMENT REDACTED IN ENTIRETY**